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Dialogue

The Staff Newsletter of the Ministry of Community and Social Services

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Implementation update

Many of the changes that have been designed for our ministry's reorganization are now falling into place. We are planning and managing our priorities so that we can all deal with change, continuously improve our work and perform our jobs well.

This update will discuss some of the major "products" of the implementation plan that will help us to re-frame the way we do business and work together.

Inter-divisional Working Relationships

In the past, it has sometimes not been clear who has responsibility for what, resulting in confusion, conflict and/or duplication. Now we will clarify divisional accountabilitys (who is responsible), collaborate better with each other to achieve well-defined outcomes and balance the need for consistency with flexibility.

To do the work of the ministry, the divisions must function together to produce the expected outcomes. By studying the

functions of each division, the restructuring task forces compiled a set of functions as performed by each division. An inter-divisional working relationships framework sets out these functional groupings and identifies each division's authority and accountability.

The relationships defined in the framework support the development of new processes such as the policy development process and the ministry communication networks (described below).

The co-operative methods of work that have always been effective will not change, but clarifying the expectations of each division will help each division to focus on its responsibilities.

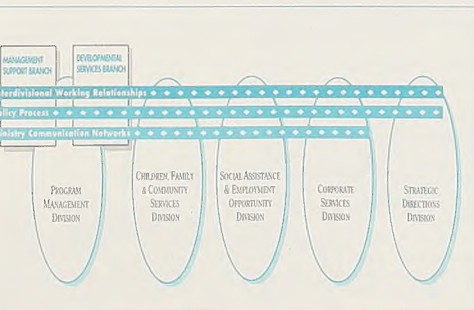
Policy Development Process

The Policy Task Force of the original restructuring project team recommended that primary focus of a revised policy development process be "implementable policy." The focus is to have a

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How we'll work together

The diagram shows how the five divisions, as well as the Management Support Branch (MSB) and Developmental Services Branch (DSB), will work together using the three "products" described in this article. Note how the ministry communication networks will span the two branches (the co-ordinators in MSB and DSB will lead the networks) and four of the divisions (excluding Strategic Directions). Policy development process involves all five divisions and the two branches. The inter-divisional working relationships span all the divisions and the entire ministry.



Redeployment update

A very high percentage of MCSS employees who were affected by the restructuring of the ministry have been successfully redeployed, either within the ministry or with other ministries.

Of the 216 employees affected by the July 5th announcement, 81 per cent have been redeployed as of Nov. 30. The figures cover classified staff only.

"Redeployed" means the affected staff were placed in other vacancies (either within

MCSS or another ministry); were placed in restructured jobs that were either essentially the same as before or were new/restructured jobs; or resigned or retired. Of the total, 87 per cent were placed in jobs and 13 per cent resigned or retired.

Efforts are being made within the ministry and by Management Board Secretariat to find placements for employees who are not yet redeployed.

Working for Santa Claus



Getting into the Christmas spirit are staff from the Toronto Area Office's income and family support unit and the program review officers unit: front row, left to right: David Wilson (in seasonal headgear), Ornella Ferwerda, Una Meier, Beverley McKerrall, Sid Sweetapple and Peggy MacKenzie. Back row, Max Seaforth, Chris Gertsakis, Kamar McDoom and Laurie Greig.

Just call them Santa's secret helpers. For almost 20 years, the Toronto Area Office's income and family support unit, aided by the Information Systems Branch, has helped thousands of families in Toronto have a happier Christmas.

They're part of the Toronto Star's Santa Claus Fund, a charitable effort that provides Christmas gift boxes to children of Family Benefits clients in Metro Toronto.

About 30,000 children receive boxes that contain a selection of gifts such as a sweater, mitts, hat, socks, bag of candy and toys appropriate to the age of the child.

Our ministry provides the names of one-third of the recipients. Metro Social Services provides the names of another one-third and the remainder are found through 32 social service agencies such as the children's aid societies and the Scott Mission.

David Wilson, one of our program review officers, has been the ministry's liaison person to the Star and its Atkinson Foundation for seven years. A 24-year veteran of the OPS, he used to be an income maintenance officer in Scarborough.

"Although this isn't an official part of our program review officers' workplan, it is a project we perform as a team," says David.

"We all feel a sense of satisfaction in helping to make Christmas a happier time for at least some children."

In September, a letter is sent to about 4,000 Family Benefits clients who have at least one child between the ages of two and 12 (the majority of letters are sent to families with three or more children). The client is asked for permission to give their children's names to the Santa Claus Fund. Information Systems Branch provides the considerable technical support that's needed to do this, notes David.

The lion's share of the work is the labelling and mailing of the 4,000 letters. In this area "the co-operation and willing assistance of my program review colleagues and our clerical support staff is invaluable and greatly appreciated," says David.

This year, 67 per cent of clients responded with a "yes."

With the replies often come interesting comments, says David. Many express their thanks and appreciation and say what it means to their children. Some who decline the boxes acknowledge the help they've received in past years but feel someone else should be given the opportunity to

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Reforms to CECBA

As you may already know, reforms are being made to the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act (CECBA) to modernize labour relations in the Ontario Public Service. Bill 117, which is the legislation that will bring about these reforms, is expected to come into effect in early January.

Bill 117 is an omnibus bill, which means it provides for legislative amendments that will benefit employees. These include allowing for greater political activity rights and a "whistleblowing" bill to protect OPS employees who disclose allegations of serious wrongdoing within the OPS.

The main result of the reforms will be a

significant increase in the number of employees throughout the OPS who will have the right to bargain. The purpose is to extend collective bargaining rights to as many employees as possible, such as the right to strike and to grievance arbitration.

For affected CECBA employees (management and excluded classifications), pay, pension and job status such as seniority will remain the same, but benefits may come from a different insurance carrier.

The above information applies to unclassified staff as well.

The Human Resources Branch will confirm employees' status once Bill 117 has been proclaimed.

comprehensive approach to policy. This means that some functions have moved from the former Operations Division to the policy divisions.

The new process will mean there will be more participation in the development of policy across the organization, so that ideas are workable and practical (implementable). This way, the implications of new policy throughout the ministry — from field operations to information systems practice — are taken into account to form the basis of implementable policy.

We are trying to create an overall approach to policy development for programs — an approach that is strategic, includes the "implementable" expectations and that works well with the new organizational structure and new ways of doing business.

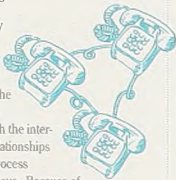
The new policy development process aims to encourage innovation across the organization; foster collaboration across organizational boundaries; clarify and enforce accountabilities and consistency; and distinguish program management issues from those that have policy implications.

The four components of the process are: issue and innovation identification; priority

assessment; policy development workplanning; and implementation planning. Work by the Policy Transition Task Force (members are the ADMs with responsibility for program policy) is continuing, and the new policy development process is expected to be launched in January.

Ministry Communication Networks

This is a very important new way of doing business in the ministry and supports both the inter-divisional relationships and policy process described above. Because of the closure of the regional offices and movement away from the traditional committee structure, we need a new way to communicate and share program information, expertise and ideas with each other. We need to get information to the people who need it, in a timely and efficient manner.



The communication networks are being established to help staff communicate more freely across the organization, yet in a structured way. They are a new forum for managers and staff to share information and provide fast, flexible and focused attention to issues, taking full advantage of the technological infrastructure (such as electronic mail) that has been created within the ministry.

Representatives from across the ministry will become part of a communications network. These are different from informal networks in that they will have a defined membership, a means of assigning members, defined functions and specified roles and responsibilities.

They will help us achieve faster and more effective decision-making by bringing the right people together quickly to identify and discuss issues and support decision-making. And, they will increase staff participation in the ministry's work, allowing better use of skills, expertise and knowledge of employees.

The bulk of network activities will be done through e-mail and teleconferencing, although people may meet from time to time.

Membership will mainly be representatives from area offices, policy branches, Financial and Capital Planning

and Information Systems (and, when needed, representatives from Human Resources, Legal Services and Communications and Marketing Branch).

Ministry communication networks are being initiated in five program areas in January. The networks will be overseen by the program co-ordinators in the Management Support and Developmental Services branches. The networks and their co-ordinators are: Children's Services, Heather Martin; Child Care, Karen Glass; Income Maintenance and Employment, Andre Iannuzziello; Community Services, Mort Seymour; Developmental Services, Gord Markham.

Working for Santa Claus: continued from page 1

receive a gift. Others feel their own financial situation is better than in previous years and they want to provide for their children themselves. "Such comments are particularly noteworthy in these times of recession and unemployment," observes David.

The gift boxes are usually delivered to clients' homes in early December by hundreds of volunteers such as firefighters, service club members and Boy Scouts.

With fairness, fun and humour: the Project DARE way

Editor's note: Last month our Theme Page told you about a number of workshops held at the annual Probation Officers Association of Ontario in Sault Ste. Marie.

We wrap up our coverage of this event in this issue.

DARE is an acronym that stands for "Development through Adventure, Responsibility and Education."

Project DARE was established in 1971 as an alternative correctional program, using wilderness experiences to promote personal growth. It reports to the North Bay Area Office and is part of Program Management Division, offering secure and open custody programs, probation programs and opportunities for management and other groups to meet in a wilderness setting for team-building and growth programming.

DARE administrator Bob Fairbridge, supervisor of student services Fraser Pauley and DARE teacher Linda MacKenzie presented an overview of the program. Utilizing an "experiential" theme, participants were taken through the DARE program and had the opportunity to take part in some of the activities that might be used in a typical day at DARE. All participants were rewarded with a DARE bandanna and an entertaining and informative presentation. D.M.

Behaviour cycles: a key to change

Michael Lynch, program manager of the Genesee Valley Regional Centre, a detention centre for youthful offenders in Flint, Michigan, presented a workshop to a very attentive group of probation officers and community participants.

The goal of this workshop was to introduce the basics of the behaviour cycle. Participants were presented with material to enable them to improve their intervention strategies with clients by helping them to answer the question: "Why did I do what I did and how do I change?" This workshop was well-attended and received very positive feedback from participants.

Beth Anich
Administrative Secretary
Sault Ste. Marie Probation Services

A DARE case study: Where motivation builds success

Chris (not his real name) was a typical troubled youth three years ago, out of control at home, unsuccessful at school and in the community. With his conflicts with law enforcement increasing, he finally received a six-month secure custody sentence. This was a new beginning for him. He was sent to Project DARE.

Chris struggled with the program, as many kids do. He missed his family and found the expectations difficult. With the help of a caring staff and the support of his peers he found success. He was given the opportunity to learn that school

can be fun and earned 51/2 school credits at DARE.

Upon release, he was so motivated that he had a very successful year in a community school, with good achievement and regular attendance. He continues to attend school regularly, has not had any trouble with the police, and is looking forward to a future that is bright. Now he is 18, and is expressing a desire to return to DARE as an outdoor recreation instructor, to pass on what he has learned.

Debbie Mills
Probation Officer, Elliot Lake



Irv Kristin photo

Project DARE encourages young offenders to take on the challenges of outdoor wilderness adventures.

Child sexual offenders

Tony Angelec and Larry Gaetano are co-facilitators of the sexual offender treatment program at the Sault Ste. Marie District Jail. Gary Bedryk is a counsellor with the Algoma Community Support Team, an MCSA-funded agency. They provided an overview of the assessment and treatment of perpetrators of child sexual abuse.

The program accommodates both offenders in custody and offenders on probation. In addition, Gary co-ordinates the Adolescent Sexual Offender Treatment Program through the Algoma Community Support Team. This program is specifically for sexual offenders between the ages of 12 and 16. Both individual and group counselling and treatment are employed.

The presenters discussed common myths and misconceptions about sexual offenders, as well as intervention strategies, and classifications of this offender sub-group. They noted a lack of resources which causes many limitations in dealing effectively with this group.

Bill Carriere
Correctional Officer
Observation and Detention Home,
Sault Ste. Marie



Helping people explore their options

Income maintenance staff in southwestern Ontario have been working together to help social assistance recipients find ways of becoming either employed or employable. The London Area Employment Committee includes income maintenance officers and supervisors, staff from community programs working in child care, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, supported employment and the Social Services Employment Program. They work together to establish employment linkages throughout the London Area Office and its local offices in Clinton, Stratford, St. Thomas, Simcoe and

Joanne Bell photo

In Woodstock, clients visiting the new local Family Benefits office are encouraged to review an "employment binder" which lists current available jobs in the area.

There's also a resource centre which can assist staff in providing up-to-date information to their clients on available education, employment and training. The waiting area in the office is a little short on magazines; that's because it instead offers lots of employment, education and training information, posted on bulletin boards and available to take away.



Income Maintenance Officer Claire Pitre in the Woodstock Local Office checks the resources centre which was set up to help all staff provide current information on education, employment and training to clients.

In Clinton, the Social Assistance Recipient Project is aimed at determining the effects of regular, one-on-one intervention with clients. It's administered by the Huron Employment Liaison Program (HELP) and funded by CEIC. IMO Marg Wright serves on this pre-employment project.

There are 25 General Welfare and 25 Family Benefits sole-support clients involved in the project, which helps them with career planning and the eventual goals of self-sufficiency.

The project is not yet complete, but there is a recommendation to continue, and client feedback has been excellent.

A jobsOntario liaison and outreach worker comes in two times a month for half-days, and a jobsOntario child care referral service is working well to help parents attend meetings and interviews.



Current job listing are available in the Woodstock Local Office in an employment binder. IMOs Lindsay Koyle and Lynda Bartlett talk about the importance of informing the workers of employment changes which a client may experience.

In Stratford, Joanne Goes was an IMO without a regular caseload for almost a year. Instead, she acted as a cost containment worker and developed ways of helping clients find other income sources or education/employment.

Her activities included front-door screening to steer clients in the right direction for employment, training or education opportunities; liaising with other partners in the employment field, such as the local jobsOntario staff, the Canada Employment and Immigration office, and Health and Welfare Canada; conducting a Canada Pension Plan blitz to identify clients who qualify for federal benefits; working on a mass mailing to clients to inform them about jobsOntario; and helping three new IMOs learn the job.

One result is that 27 Family Benefits clients were hired through jobsOntario in Perth County, representing 16 per cent of the total hired. Half of the total hired through jobsOntario have been women, who are traditionally the largest percentage of social assistance recipients.



In Simcoe, Sheila Bannon (left) is an employment counsellor for jobsOntario in Haldimand-Norfolk. She's meeting with Judy Buck, administrator of the Simcoe Local Office.

Ontario Training and Adjustment Board meetings.

These committees provide the Simcoe Local office staff with networking opportunities and the

chance to exchange information that will help clients with training and employment. Some of these committees are:

- ♦ the Haldimand-Norfolk and Training Network, a three-year-old committee that

Woodstock, meeting monthly to exchange employment news and views.

It's also a forum for sharing good ideas," says supervisor Mary Veenman. Since a jobsOntario Training outreach worker started working the the London office, other jobsOntario brokers within the area have adopted the concept. A quarterly Employment News Bulletin helps keep everyone in touch with what's going on.

Here are some "thumbnail sketches" about the offices and what they're doing to encourage clients to explore their options in employment, education and training.



Green and Black Day in the London Area Office helped staff to promote jobsOntario to clients on June 30. These are the jobsOntario colours.

In the London Area Office,

there was a certain sameness to the attire of staff on June 30. That's because it was Green and Black Day — the colours of the Ontario government and jobsOntario — and IMO staff wanted to promote jobsOntario to clients. The incentive to participate was provided by a gift certificate to a local restaurant, with the draw open only to those who wore green and black; the winner was a parental support worker, Brian Montoux.

Chris Jackson is a jobsOntario training outreach worker who sees Family Benefits and VRS clients at the London Area Office one day per week to explain the program and how people could get into it.

An easy-to-update bulletin board provides information to staff on employment, cost containment efforts, minutes of the Area Employment Committee and available SSEP positions.

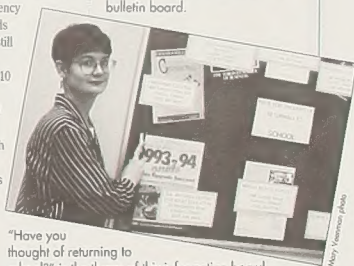
In St. Thomas, the Community

Resource Liaison (CRL) Project provides clients in Elgin County with one-on-one support in how to obtain education, training and employment services. Agencies such as Fanshawe College, the board of education, Canada Employment and Immigration and others participate. Presentations are made to the agencies' employees and their clients.

Clients are referred to CRL, often by our IMOs, and attend an office interview. Paula Van Diddoom's job is to try to make personal contact with the agency best suited to her or his needs while the office interview is still on; otherwise, the client is expected to follow up within 10 days.

CRL also helps clients find any supports they need to participate in a program, such as child care.

One reason the program is successful is its ability to match clients with programs in a timely and efficient manner. This is made possible through a database set up on a personal computer.



"Have you thought of returning to school?" is the theme of this information board for clients in the London Area Office, where Shelley Long is updating brochures.

applications in the waiting rooms and posting available jobs;

- ♦ the Norfolk Women's Community Group, which puts together pre-employment training programs geared mainly toward social assistance recipients. Programs offered in the past by this group are Fresh Start, Essential Job Readiness Training and a drywall course for women who are interested in non-traditional work courses.

As well, the IMOs in the Simcoe office are very active in referring clients to the different programs.

Our Simcoe Local Office

covers the Haldimand-Norfolk region. Local office administrator Judy Buck and IMO Brenda Langas belong to a number of employment-related committees, along with VRS staffer Sue Chai, who also attends



How many of us ARE there?

The ministry's staff strength report, produced by the Human Resources Branch, shows this head count as of the end of November:

Classified:	Full-time:	8,182
	Part-time:	380
Unclassified:	Full-time:	749
	Part-time:	92
	*On call:	599
Total:		10,002

Plus outside staff (employees on secondment): 72

The above figures don't include staff on leave of absence (LOA), and those on long-term income protection (LTIP).

*Contract employees called in on an "as-needed" basis, mainly in facilities.

People on the move

Judith Wright is leaving her position as Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Directions Division to take on



Andrea Walker

new duties in the new year with the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Andrea Walker, director of Legal Services Branch since 1988, has agreed to become acting ADM of Strategic Directions for three months, beginning Jan. 4.

Peter Wiley, currently deputy director of Legal Services, will take over Andrea's role for the interim.

Child Care Branch, headed by Richard Bradley, will no longer report to Strategic Directions. Beginning Jan. 4 the branch will report to Lucille Roch, ADM of Children, Family and Community Services (CFCS) Division.

Ron Murray has joined the Child Care Branch, where he is the project manager in charge of business processes and associated information systems that will support child care reform. The Deputy Minister's executive assistant, Donna Marafioti, has taken over Ron's former duties as leader of the ministry's Restructuring Implementation Team.

John Rabeau, formerly director of the North Regional Office, has accepted a position as the first director of the newly-formed aboriginal gaming branch, an offshoot of the Casino Project at the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. He had been with MCSS since 1979.

The Social Assistance Programs Branch has been restructured. Among the staff are: John Stapleton, manager of operational policy; Allan Kirk, manager

of program design and support; Chandra Pala, manager of statistics and analysis; and Rose Langhout, manager of Job-Link, Social Assistance Reform Project (SARP). Murray Yewer and Marion Farkas have also joined the branch.

Also within the Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities Division, Don Young becomes the director of the Social

Assistance Reform Project (SARP) on Jan. 3, where he will manage the development of policy options and phase-in of a reformed social assistance system. He was previously with the Child Care Branch.

Working closely with Don will be Ellen Waxman who became director of Job-Link within SARP on Dec. 20. Ellen was previously the chief of staff with the Minister's Office.

Both of those positions are 12-month special assignments.

Remember, we want to hear about staff changes, particularly retirements, in your workplace. Just contact the Dialogue editor with your information (address is in the box at the right).



Ellen Waxman

Reducing violence in the workplace

The Ontario government has announced the formation of a new advisory committee that will find ways to reduce violence in the workplace.

MCSS Minister Tony Silpo says the new committee — which reports to the Minister of Labour — will recommend measures to reduce workplace violence in the social services sector.

The committee will review and examine factors and causes of violence in the workplace, the nature and level of violence, and the various measures already in place in different work settings. Then it will identify gaps and find cost-

effective strategies and solutions.

The committee members will include representatives of workers and employers in the social services sector.

A recent survey of 1,421 CUPE social service workers showed that 65 per cent had been subjected to one or more aggressive acts at work over a two-year period. A U.S. study also shows that murder is the leading cause of death in the workplace.

For more information, contact Kathy Macpherson, manager of Physical Workplace Programs at (416) 327-4759.

D'Arcy closure date extended

The ministry has decided not to close D'Arcy Place in Picton until 1996, rather than the previously-announced March 1994 deadline.

The extension is aimed at ensuring there is enough time to make appropriate plans for the 51 remaining clients

to live in community settings.

As a result, there is no immediate impact on the 169 employees who work at D'Arcy. Surplus notices will not be given to employees until the union and staff have been consulted, and the Collective Agreement will apply at that time.

Fun events the United way

Another United Way campaign is over, with many fund-raising events held by staff all over the province. Among them was North York Probation and Community Services, which sponsored a combination pot-luck lunch, auction sale and garage sale on a single day. All proceeds went toward the United Way and a great time was had by the 30-plus

Toronto area staff who took part. In the photo, the special efforts of Joyce Green and Julia Quamme, support staff at North York Probation, helped to raise close to \$1,000 that day. Campaign tallies were not available at press time, but it was expected that the ministry would meet its Metro Toronto United Way goal of \$75,000.

Robert Lamy photo



dialogue

Ontario Community and Social Services

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